



STATEMENT OF
ROBERT L. WHITE
PRESIDENT
NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF POSTAL AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
BEFORE THE
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
APRIL 17, 1985

MR. CHAIRMAN, I AM PLEASED TO APPEAR BEFORE YOU TODAY ON BEHALF OF ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF POSTAL AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES. WE APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY AND WE OFFER OUR SUPPORT FOR THE ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULE PROGRAM TO MAKE PERMANENT THE OPTION OF FLEXIBLE AND COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULES FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

SINCE THE CONGRESS ENACTED LEGISLATION IN 1978 ESTABLISHING THE USE OF FLEXIBLE AND COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULES, THE POSITIVE RESULTS AND BENEFITS TO FEDERAL WORKERS HAVE BEEN OVERWHELMING.

IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT SOME EXPERIMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS BEGIN WITH GOOD RESULTS AND GOOD INTENTIONS BUT END DISASTEROUSLY UPON IMPLEMENTATION. THIS PROGRAM HAS NOT BEEN ONE OF THEM.

FEDERAL WORKERS WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF POSTAL AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES REPORT TO ME THAT HAVING THIS KIND OF CONTROL OVER THEIR WORK SCHEDULES ALLOWS THEM TO SCHEDULE DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR CHILDREN WITHOUT TAKING ANNUAL LEAVE. IN INSTANCES WHERE BOTH PARENTS ARE FEDERAL WORKERS, THE COMPRESSED AND FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE CAN MEAN THAT ONE PARENT OR THE OTHER CAN BE IN THE HOME PROVIDING THE PARENTAL SUPERVISION TO CHILDREN THAT IS SO BADLY NEEDED IN THIS DAY AND TIME. IF A BENEFIT TO THE WORKERS RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN SERVICE - THAT BENEFIT WOULD HAVE TO

BE ELIMINATED.

IF THE UTILIZATION OF THESE SCHEDULES WAS HARMFUL TO GOVERNMENT SERVICE IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY, I AM SURE THE SENTIMENTS FAVORING THEIR CONTINUATION WOULD BE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC. FEDERAL WORKERS WANT TO DO A GOOD JOB. THEY TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR WORK. A PERSON WHO ENTERS THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE ASSUMES A RESPONSIBILITY TO SERVE THE PUBLIC. ANY PROGRAM WHICH WOULD HINDER HIS OR HER PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE CHANGED - IF NOT ELIMINATED. CONVERSELY, A PROGRAM WHICH OBVIOUSLY ENHANCES THE PERFORMANCE OF THE WORKER AND RESULTS IN A MORE SUPERIOR QUALITY OF SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC SHOULD CERTAINLY BE MAINTAINED AND PROTECTED.

WE HAVE ALL BEEN VICTIMS OF RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC SNARLS THAT ARE SO DAMAGING TO THE NERVES. IT IS A WELL KNOWN FACT THAT A PART OF THE REASON FOR IMPOSSIBLE TRAFFIC JAMS, AS WELL AS A GOOD MANY ACCIDENTS IS THE EFFECT OF TOO MANY PEOPLE REQUIRED TO BE AT THE SAME PLACE AT THE SAME TIME.

THEREFORE, FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS IS DECIDEDLY A HEALTH BENEFIT OF NO SMALL CONSEQUENCE. TWO RELATIVELY NEW WORDS THAT HAVE CREPT INTO THE WORLD OF WORK ARE "JOB-STRESS" AND "BURNOUT." I WOULD SUBMIT THAT THE BUSINESS OF TRAVELLING TO AND FROM WORK DURING RUSH HOURS, CONTRIBUTES MORE TO THESE CONDITIONS THAN THE JOB ITSELF. FEDERAL WORKERS ARE COMPETENT, AND COMPETENCY ON THE JOB DOES NOT GENERALLY PRODUCE STRESS AND BURNOUT. THESE ARE PRODUCTS OF HELPLESSNESS. THE KIND

ONE FEELS WHEN HE OR SHE IS STUCK IN TRAFFIC, CAN'T GET TO WORK ON TIME AND HAS ALREADY BEEN WARNED OF TARDINESS. FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS RELIEVES THE TENSION OF BEING CAUGHT IN TRAFFIC AND FACING POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION FROM A HOSTILE SUPERVISOR.

FLEXITIME VIRTUALLY ELIMINATES TARDINESS. A COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULE GIVES PARENTS A DAY TO SPEND VISITING THE SCHOOL WHERE THEIR CHILD IS ATTENDING. OR PERHAPS A LONG WEEK-END TO SPEND WITH THEIR OWN AGING PARENTS. ALL OF THESE ARE EXCEEDINGLY POSITIVE BENEFITS OF WHICH OUR SOCIETY MOST ABUNDANTLY APPROVES.

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE ABSENCE OF CERTAIN KINDS OF ANXIETY INCREASES EFFICIENCY AND LIFTS THE MORALE OF ALL WORKERS.

TOO MANY OF OUR WAKING HOURS ARE SPENT ON THE JOB FOR THEM TO BE SPENT UNDER STRESSFUL CONDITIONS THAT CAN BE ALTERED.

COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULES AND FLEXITIME ARE SIGNIFICANT DETERRENTS TO JOB STRESS.

AND FINALLY, MR. CHAIRMAN, IT OCCURS TO ME THAT WITH THE ADVENT OF SO MANY ASSAULTS AGAINST GOVERNMENT WORKERS - WE NEED TO INSTITUTE ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES TO KEEP AND TO ENTICE HIGH CALIBER INDIVIDUALS INTO THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE. WHAT WITH THE THREAT OF DOWN-GRADING, RIF'S, PAY FREEZES, INCREASE IN RETIREMENT AGE, AND A MARKED AND INEVITABLE REDUCTION IN BENEFITS - THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MAY NO LONGER EXPECT TO ATTRACT

THE HIGH QUALITY OF SUPERIOR AND DEDICATED WORKER IT HAS IN THE PAST.

THE ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULE COULD HELP TO MAKE PERSONS WANT TO JOIN THE CIVIL SERVICE AND BECOME A PART OF THE DEDICATED FEDERAL WORKFORCE. WITHOUT THEM, THE COUNTRY CANNOT FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY OR EFFICIENTLY. I WISH TO THANK THIS SUBCOMMITTEE FOR PROVIDING OUR UNION WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HR 1534. I WILL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

THANK YOU.